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SUBSTITUTE ESTIMATE OF APPROPRIATION, DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FISCAL YEAR 1920.

LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY,

TRANSMITTING

COPY OF A COMMUNICATION FROM THE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE, SUBMITTING A SUBSTITUTE ESTIMATE OF APPROPRIATION, REQUIRED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR FARMERS' COOPERATIVE DEMONSTRATION WORK, FISCAL YEAR 1920.

JANUARY 10, 1919.—Referred to the Committee on Agriculture and ordered to be printed.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
Washington, January 9, 1919.

THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith for the consideration of Congress copy of a communication from the Secretary of Agriculture of the 6th instant, submitting a substitute estimate of appropriation, in the sum of \$5,670,000, required by the Department of Agriculture for farmers' cooperative demonstration work, fiscal year 1920, in lieu of the items of \$551,280 and \$645,040, for this object submitted on pages 273 and 275, respectively, Book of Estimates for 1920.

The necessity for the appropriation and the reasons for the submission of the estimate at this time are fully set forth in the letter of the Secretary of Agriculture herewith.

Net increase asked, \$4,473,680.

Respectfully,

CARTER GLASS, *Secretary.*

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
Washington, January 6, 1919.

The SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith for submission to the Congress for inclusion in the agricultural appropriation bill for the fiscal year 1920, the following supplemental estimate:

Omit, under the heading "States Relations Service," the following items:

For farmers' cooperative demonstration work outside of the cotton belt, including the employment of labor in the city of Washington and elsewhere, supplies, and all other necessary expenses, \$551,280.

For farmers' cooperative demonstrations and for the study and demonstration of the best methods of meeting the ravages of the cotton-boll weevil, including the employment of labor in the city of Washington and elsewhere, supplies, and all other necessary expenses, \$645,040: *Provided*, That the expense of such service shall be defrayed from this appropriation and such cooperative funds as may be voluntarily contributed by State, county, and municipal agencies, associations of farmers, and individual farmers, universities, colleges, boards of trade, chambers of commerce, other local associations of business men, business organizations, and individuals within the State;

and insert in lieu thereof the following:

For farmers' cooperative demonstration work through county, district, and urban agents and others, including the employment of labor in the city of Washington and elsewhere, supplies and all other necessary expenses, \$5,670,000: *Provided*, That the expense of such service shall be defrayed from this appropriation and such cooperative funds as may be voluntarily contributed by State, county, and municipal agencies, associations of farmers, and individual farmers, universities, colleges, boards of trade, chambers of commerce, other local associations of business men, business organizations, and individuals within the State: *Provided further*, That eighty per cent of the sums appropriated in this act for farmers' cooperative demonstration work shall be allotted by the Secretary of Agriculture for use in the several States on the apportionment basis established in the act of Congress of May eighth, nineteen hundred and fourteen, entitled "An act to provide for cooperative agricultural extension work between the agricultural colleges in the several States receiving the benefits of an act of Congress approved July second, eighteen hundred and sixty-two, and of acts supplementary thereto, and the United States Department of Agriculture," and that all sums herein appropriated which are used for demonstration or extension work within any State shall be used and expended in accordance with plans mutually agreed upon by the Secretary of Agriculture and the proper officials of the college in such State which receives the benefits of the said act of Congress of May eighth, nineteen hundred and fourteen.

Aside from the amounts accruing under the agricultural extension act of May 8, 1914, the agricultural appropriation act for 1919, and the estimate for 1920, which are now under consideration by the Congress, include the sum of \$1,204,940 for the conduct of agricultural extension work in cooperation with the agricultural colleges of the various States. The food-production act of November 21, 1918, carries an additional appropriation of \$6,100,000, making a total of \$7,304,940 for the current fiscal year. The supplemental estimate, which has been prepared after very thorough consideration of the whole matter and consultation with the representatives of the agricultural colleges suggests a total appropriation for 1920 in addition to the amounts provided by the agricultural extension act of \$5,670,000, a reduction of \$1,634,940 below the amount available for cooperative extension work in 1919.

The agricultural extension act, passed three months before the outbreak of the European war, contemplated the gradual development throughout the country of a system of practical instruction in agriculture and home economics. It involved the location in the

several counties of agricultural agents and home demonstration agents who, through close contact with the people and intimate relations with the agricultural colleges, experiment stations and this department, would be able to acquaint themselves thoroughly with the needs of the rural communities and carry to the farmers and their families, on their own farms, the latest and best practical and scientific information regarding the agricultural problems confronting them. It involved also demonstration work among boys and girls, and the assignment of specialists in the various branches of agriculture and home economics, whose headquarters would ordinarily be at the agricultural colleges or the department, to supplement the activities of the extension agents.

All the States promptly accepted the provisions of this act, and the work under it proceeded rapidly. When the United States entered the war, this great educational system was well established and had met with great favor in all sections of the Union. It was immediately recognized that it could be used as a very effective means for giving concrete aid to the farmers of the Nation in increasing the production of food, feeds, and live stock to meet the needs of the United States and of the nations associated with it in the war, as well as in carrying out the program of food conservation. The Congress, therefore, made provision in the food production act for speeding up the development of the system. This has been done to such an extent that county agricultural agents are now employed in approximately 2,400 counties and home demonstration agents are working in about 1,400. These agents, together with boys and girls club leaders, extension specialists, and administrative officers, constitute a force of over 6,000 persons engaged in demonstration and extension work. During the intensive campaigns for food production and conservation conducted under the severe war stress of the first half of 1919, approximately 1,000 additional workers were appointed as assistant county agents and specialists. These have since been withdrawn, so that the force now employed may be said to represent, in considerable measure, the development, somewhat earlier than originally anticipated, of the extension work as defined in and contemplated by the act of May 8, 1914. The expenses of living, travel, supplies, and the like, normally connected with such work have greatly increased since the passage of the act. The funds provided by it, therefore, are entirely insufficient for the maintenance throughout the country of such an extension system as the act had in view. Now that the work has been effectively organized and developed as a war measure, it seems to me that it would be highly desirable and wise to anticipate the funds that would accrue under the act by 1922 and to make adequate provisions for the continuance of the agents of proved efficiency already on the rolls. It would be a serious mistake, in my opinion, to dismantle this great organization and then build it up again through a series of years.

For the fiscal year 1919 the Federal appropriation under the extension act is \$2,580,000, which, combined with the required offset from State sources of \$2,100,000, makes a total of \$4,680,000. The States have, in addition, contributed nearly \$4,000,000, and the regular and emergency appropriations to this department, as already indicated, amount to \$7,304,940. In all, there is available for exten-

sion work this year about \$16,000,000. To continue the work on its present basis, the following sums will be required:

Agricultural extension act:	
Federal.....	3,080,000
State.....	2,600,000
Additional:	
Federal.....	5,670,000
State.....	4,650,000
Total.....	16,000,000

If the appropriation suggested in the supplemental estimate is made available, it is proposed, first, to provide for the maintenance of county agents in at least 2,400 counties and to extend the work to such other counties as the funds accruing from State sources may permit; second, to maintain the present force of home demonstration agents; and, third, to use the remainder of the appropriation for the continuation and development of the boys' and girls' club activities.

The value of the extension work as a means of aiding the farmers and their families in crop and animal production, the marketing of products, the making of the home and its environment more comfortable and healthful, and the promotion of a broader and more satisfactory community life has been so fully demonstrated that it is not necessary to emphasize the importance of perpetuating the organization and providing for its reasonable expansion to more completely reach all the people in the rural communities.

During the past year a million farmers have associated themselves with the farm bureaus, county councils of agriculture and other organizations supporting the work of the county agents, and about half of these farmers carried on demonstrations on their own farms. Through visits to farms, meetings, and otherwise, more than half the total number of farmers in the United States have been reached. At least 1,500,000 women have received instruction from the home demonstration agents, and 2,000,000 boys and girls have taken part in the club activities.

The increased production of the American farmers in 1917 and 1918 is sufficient evidence of the efficiency of the extension work. By means of the extension organization, with its agencies reaching into 2,400 out of approximately 2,850 agricultural counties in the United States, the Government was able to present to the farmers of every neighborhood, by intimate personal contact, the Nation's needs. Unquestionably the farmers of the United States were governed in large degree by patriotism, but it is not too much to say that they could not possibly have produced so intelligently if there had not been this organized system of information and assistance. The same system is no less needed in the immediate future than it has been under war conditions.

Considering the rapidity with which the work has been extended during the past year, I think it may be said that the States and the counties have done well in supplementing the Federal appropriations. The problem now is to hold all that has been gained which is worthy of a permanent place in this system of popular practical education. It would be most unfortunate not to make permanent the results of the extraordinary efforts of the people and their extension agents during the war as far as these results will contribute to the prosperity of our agricultural and country life in times of peace. It is believed

that this can be done with the aid of the appropriation recommended for the demonstration work and such additional funds as we may reasonably expect to be contributed from State sources.

The Federal appropriations under the extension act will increase by \$500,000 annually until 1922-23. It may be found desirable to decrease the appropriations to this department after next year by a similar amount. If this were done and the States continued to supply funds over and above those necessary to meet the requirements of the act, the amounts available for demonstration work up to 1923 may be roughly approximated in the following table:

Funds for demonstration and extension work.

Years.	Lever funds.		United States Department of Agriculture.	State, county, and other.	Total.
	Federal.	State.			
1918-19.....	\$2,580,000	\$2,100,000	\$7,304,940	\$3,982,586	\$15,967,526
1919-20.....	3,080,000	2,600,000	5,670,000	4,670,000	16,000,000
1920-21.....	3,580,000	3,100,000	5,170,000	¹ 4,650,000	¹ 16,500,000
1921-22.....	4,080,000	3,600,000	4,670,000	¹ 4,650,000	¹ 17,000,000
1922-23.....	4,580,000	4,100,000	4,170,000	¹ 4,650,000	¹ 17,500,000

¹ The interest of the farmers in the extension work is constantly increasing and it is probable that the amounts indicated under "State, county, and other," and consequently under "Total," for 1920-21, 1921-22, 1922-23 will continue to increase.

The supplemental estimate suggests that only 80 per cent of the appropriation be allotted for use in the States on the basis established in the extension act, in order that account may be taken of conditions in some States which may require special consideration and adjustment of allotments to make them most equitable. In addition to these adjustments, the unallotted 20 per cent would provide for the maintenance of the Washington extension office and the employment of a limited number of field agents, with headquarters in Washington, who will go into the States to assist in the organization and conduct of the extension work.

Very truly, yours,

D. F. HOUSTON, *Secretary.*



